

**COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA**  
**Rabbit Valley Working Group Meeting Minutes**  
**April 8, 2002**

Attendees:

Art Donoho	Mike Click	Chris Jouflas	Lovell Sasser
Bob Silbernagel	Jim Cooper	Neal McKinstry	Julie Stotler
Sue Benjamin	Dave Dunsmoor	John Potter	Charlie Sweet
Nadja Brozina	Dave Farny	Eric Rechel	Paul Toft
Kathy Click	N. J. Fulmer	Steve Renstrom	

**Greetings and Introductions**

The meeting was held at the Fruita Civic Center and called to order at 5:50 p.m. by Chairman Dave Farny. Eighteen people were present at the beginning of the meeting.

**Working Group Discussions**

Dave said he wanted to discuss issues that people had as a result of the April 7 field trip to Rabbit Valley.

After a short discussion regarding target shooting in the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area (CCNCA), the Working Group reached consensus on the preferred policy of:

There should be no shooting allowed south of Interstate 70, except for legitimate hunting. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will work with representatives of shooting groups to investigate potential target-shooting areas north of the Interstate. If a safe, accessible area can be found, that area should be considered for target shooting.

Other issues raised without reaching consensus include:

- Camping: The proliferation of dispersed camping sites is a problem because many people seek isolation, not wanting to camp in designated camping areas.
- Camp fires: Rules now require fire pans in camping areas. If fire pits are constructed, it only encourages people to cut down trees for firewood.

- Trash: It was suggested that BLM and citizens work with Mesa County to provide a trash facility in the Rabbit Valley area.
- Motorized trails: Representatives of motorcycle groups said they would like to have at least one trail that allows them to reach the Colorado River. They did not have a specific trail in mind. Art Donoho said they would also like to see the undesignated trail north of Interstate 70, that heads west into Utah, designated as a motorcycle trail.

Art added that it would make sense, as well as reduce traffic problems, if Trail 2 could be rerouted near the parking area to eliminate multiple crossings over the main road. This will only be possible, however, if the BLM acquires the Joufflas property.

Jim Cooper, BLM Transportation Planner, wants to create more trail loops, and when possible, get off-road trails away from the sandy bottomlands and onto rock ledges. Not only would this trail design save grass and reduce impact, but also provide more fun for off-road riders.

Environmental representatives Eric Rechel and N. J. Fulmer said that if new trails are created, others should be closed to maintain the current number of trails per unit. Both Eric and N. J. also want to ensure that every trail is sensitive to endangered wildlife and plant habitat. N. J. would like to research trail density relative to land health in Rabbit Valley.

Jim Cooper said that his goal is not to increase impact but to limit impact by increasing the amount of dispersed trails, thereby discouraging others from creating their own.

N. J. asked, "At what point do we say, enough is enough? We're just not going to keep building more and more trails."

Art stated that any dead-end trails not available for making into loops and not leading to specific destinations, such as the river or a mesa top, should be closed. But, representatives of the 4-wheel drive community do not want to see dead-end trails closed.

Dave agreed to present a report on the Rabbit Valley Working Group activities at the April 11 Advisory Committee meeting.

Working Group members agreed to meet every two weeks from now on, and the next meeting is scheduled for 5:45 p.m.